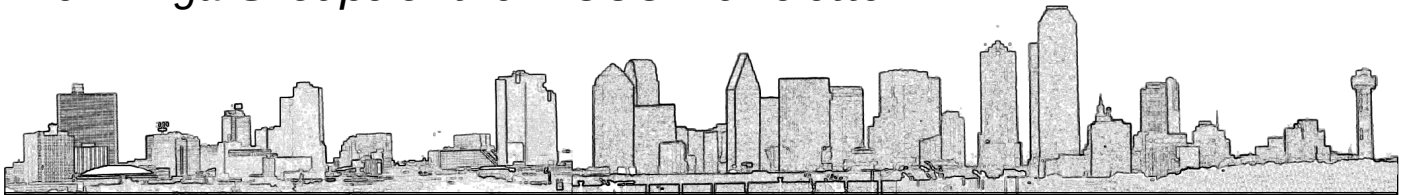


The AGM Journal

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The Virtual World of Java

An Amiga Software Bonanza?

by Rick Bilonick, Pittsburgh Computer User Group

Imagine going down to your local Egghead's and buying software for your Amiga. Impossible? Certainly you can't do it today. But, incredible as it seems, it may actually happen in the near future. How is this possible, given the state of the Amiga hardware and software markets since the demise of Commodore several years ago?

If it does happen it is unlikely to be due to a resurgence in the Amiga (although we would all like to see this). It could happen if a language named Java™ catches on. What is Java™ and why is it so important? First, the name. Java™ is not an acronym for anything. Java™ is, like C++, an object-oriented programming language. If this is all that Java™ is, it would be unlikely to distinguish itself among programming languages — and even less likely to help increase available software for the Amiga.

Where Java™ stands apart from all other languages is its ability to run on ANY computer — regardless of the computer's CPU (central processing unit — in the Amiga, some variant of a Motorola 680xx processor) and the computer's operating system (on the Amiga, this would be AmigaOS). Now, of course, there is a catch (there had to be a catch). The catch is, for Java™ to run on a particular computer with a particular operating system (CPU/OS, there must be a Java Virtual Machine (JVM). When someone writes a Java™ application (e.g., a word processing program), the code is exactly the same regardless of CPU/OS. The JVM translates the Java Code — on the fly — into instructions the particular computer can actually execute. The JVM is simply a piece of software, written for a particular CPU/OS, that does the translation.

As far as I can see, Java™ should be irresistible to software developers. Instead of writing an application for a particular computer, porting it to other computers (which involves likely adapting/modifying and then compiling it for each supported CPU/OS), and then having to maintain several versions, a developer would write one set of code and maintain one set of code. Strictly speaking, a developer

never has to compile the code — each user compiles the code each time the application is executed for his/her CPU/OS.

Now, of course, people have been able to run a program written for one CPU/OS on a different CPU/OS. This has typically been done through emulation. A software program is written that emulates a different CPU/OS which allows the application software to run. A number of emulators have been available for the Amiga. For example, the shareware program ShapeShifter allows Mac software to be run on the Amiga using only a software emulator. There also are pure software emulators for DOS. There are several problems with this approach. First, someone has to write the emulation code (not an easy task). Second, the emulation software is often proprietary which means you have to buy it first. And third, because of the complexity, the application software tends to run more slowly because of the overhead of using one system to emulate another. An example of the slowness is given by the emulation of a C64 on an Amiga. The A64 package allows you to run C64 programs on the Amiga without the need of any C64 hardware (after you first have copied the applications from the old C64 floppies to an Amiga floppy or hard drive). In order to get reasonably good performance, you need a fairly fast Amiga — at least an A3000 or accelerated A2000 or A500. Even so, the A64 package was an excellent emulation (although it could not handle every conceivable C64 program) and it ran extremely well on the A4000 and A1200. But, in the end, you are emulating a much slower computer by using a much more powerful computer.

Java™ improves on this scenario. The Java Virtual Machine doesn't emulate any particular computer. It's not an emulation. The JVM translates the Java code into executable instructions for the computer as the application is running. Thus, Java™ applications, strictly speaking, are not compiled — they are interpreted. (This is similar to the original concept of the BASIC language. The original

BASIC language was interpreted and not compiled. This was done to make writing and debugging faster and easier.)

Of course, running interpreted code is slower than running compiled code — often slower by a factor of 20. For many applications, especially when running on much more powerful computers made currently, this is not a problem. In addition, the technique of doing “just in time” (JIT) compilation can dramatically speed up the Java™ application. When the JIT option is invoked, the first time a Java™ code module (called a “class”) is invoked, it is compiled. Thereafter, each time it is called, the compiled code is used. You can also permanently compile all the code first and have Java store the code in each class.

Java™ was developed as part of a project at Sun Microsystems to provide a language for controlling computer products which use computer chips. As it was being developed, its application to distributed processing (such as exists in a network and the Internet) was noticed. The first major use of Java™ has been the Java™ applets (small applications) used on the Internet. These applets eliminate the need for applications residing on the computer accessing the Internet. Instead, the Java™ applets are downloaded when needed, executed, and (eventually) deleted. The applet is the same regardless of the CPU/OS so they run the same on everyone's computer.

Sun Microsystems has made Java™ available for licencing and porting free of charge. This helps insure that the JVM will exist on most if not all computer platforms. Sun has also instituted a certification program to insure that Java™ will not be modified or extended which would prevent the same code from running exactly the same on all platforms. Certified applications will be 100% Java™.

Is there a JVM for the Amiga? Well, not yet. But there is a group of programmers working on this. Mattias Johansson (matj@o.lst.se) is the sponsor for the P'Jami (Porting Java™ Programming Language to the Amiga). For more information on this project, see <http://www.mjvasoft.com/products/JDL/jdk-porst.html> on the Internet. For general information on Java™, see <http://www.javasoft.com>.

When this port of the JVM is available on the Amiga, Amiga users will be able to run Java™ applets from the Internet. Also, shortly, complete applications will be available. Would you like to run a modern version of WordPerfect (a word processor), Quattro Pro (a spreadsheet), a charting program, a graphing program, and a presentation program? Corel (the current owner of WordPerfect) is porting this suite of business applications to Java™. A pre-beta release of Corel Office for Java™ is available from Corel's web pages (<http://www.corel.com>). So far, after downloading the 2.5mb of code and unzipping it, I've been able to run the same code on three different platforms: Silicon Graphics' IRIX 6.3 (Unix), OS/2 on an IBM clone, and NT on the same model IBM clone. The Java™ code uses an abstract windowing system so that the

graphical user interface looks like the GUI of the system it's running on. The finished Corel Office for Java™ should go on sale the first half of this year. The pre-beta demo runs very nicely, but, of course, not all features are implemented (you can read and write files but not print, for example). It clearly works and works well — it proves the basic concept of Java™. Sun has also released an Internet browser written completely in Java™ which is available for downloading.

So we might actually see a time when the software applications we use are independent of the particular computer and operating system we use. This could help free us from the stranglehold that Microsoft has on software. It might also allow for much greater innovation in the design of computers. Without an established software base, it is virtually impossible to create a totally new computer. If Java™ succeeds, and especially if it becomes the first choice for developers, a newly created computer would only need to have the JVM ported to it (a relatively simple thing for a computer company). AGM

CyberGraphX vs. Picasso96

I ran a comparison between CyberGraphX 2.25 and Picasso96 1.21 on my 3000 with Cyberstorm MkII and Cybervision64, using WSpeed. Here are the results.

WSpeed © 1994 JAMI Soft Development

Description:

Screenmode: CVision: 15Bit 800 x 600, 256 Colors

	CybergraphX	Picasso96
Put Pixels	860681	893227
Draw Lines	32436	31864
Draw Hor/Ver	69988	141373
Draw Circles	3727	129308
Draw Ellipse	3369	118109
Draw Boxes	2631	3638
Scroll X	499	685
Scroll Y	484	661
Print Texts	54358	23669
CON: Output	407	635
Open Windows	246	264
Size Windows	908	968
Move Windows	87	83
Swap Screens	32	599
Areafill	898	441

...Johnny Kitchens

AGM

MERAPI

A Java Virtual Machine For The Amiga From Haage & Partner A Press Release



The MERAPI project is still under development. Project started in late 1996. Release date is about July/August 97. We will release information on features and prices in June/July. "MERAPI" will be the optimal solution for programmers and end-users.

We proudly announce another important project for the future of the Amiga:

Code name: "MERAPI"

Taking You To Java

Java's gathering momentum in the computer market has raised hopes of a more open, decentralized, and tolerant software future than the developments of recent years have led us to expect. For Amiga users, it has given rise to a

Java's gathering momentum in the computer market has raised hopes of a more open, decentralized, and tolerant software future than the developments of recent years have led us to expect.

demand for participation in this future—participation that can only be provided by a good Java Virtual Machine implementation (the software engine that executes programs created in Java) for our machine.

To meet this demand, Haage & Partner are developing a Java Virtual Machine (JVM) implementation under the code name "Merapi." In our perception, the Java technology has several attractive features particularly from the Amiga users' point of view:

- It will bring in new applications. Dozens upon dozens of companies in the PC software market have already committed themselves to delivering applications that can run on any machine that supports Java, breaking at last the old chains of platform incompatibility. Their new products will now add value to the Amiga as well as to the more common platforms.
- As software availability ceases to be a compelling factor in deciding on a computer platform, the Amiga's friendliness and ease of use will prove sufficient reason to choose it over eg. Windows or the Mac OS if one happens to prefer the Amiga computer.
- The similarity of design principles and flexibility of Java

and the Amiga OS have great synergetic potential: A good JVM implementation can make it seem as if Java and the Amiga operating system were designed for each other from the start.

- Java complements the Amiga system well. Memory protection and resource tracking, for instance, are integral parts of the Java environment. Whereas these are merely a duplication of effort when used under operating systems that already have such features built in, on the Amiga they very neatly fill in the blanks that many users see in the Amiga operating system. The Merapi project focuses specifically on bringing these benefits to the Amiga user base.

Apart from the obvious goals of compatibility and the ability to run Java software fast, which all JVM implementations strive for, Merapi has more characteristic aims. The main ones are:

- High quality that developers and users alike can depend on for robustness, security, and longevity.
- Making the best possible use of what the Amiga OS has to offer. Rather than attempting to cram UNIX code into an Amiga mold or imitating existing PC products, Merapi is designed for the Amiga from the ground up to give you the best possible match.
- Letting non-Java software, as well as the user, make the best possible use of what Java has to offer. The services of the Java subsystem are made available to external software through an open interface, so the use of Java software is not limited to eye candy inside a Web browser window. Java will be no second-class citizen in your system!

MERAPI project is done by Jeroen Vermeulen in co-operation with the Storm team. MERAPI will be integrated into Web browsers like Voyager NG, but it will also be a stand-alone JAVA interpreter with just-in-time compiler (to speed it up, JIT) to run Java applications like Corel Office for Java.

MERAPI will also be integrated into the Storm Development System to enable programmers to write JAVA applications on the Amiga. A port to p.OS and PowerUP will be done.

1997 — HAAGE & PARTNER Computer
<http://www.haage-partner.com> 

Amiga News

Keeping Abreast of the Latest Developments

Amiga Clones — New Operating Systems — Power-PC Based Amigas

News!

I don't normally include press releases in the newsletter but it seems that there has been a lot happening in the Amiga world lately — and it seems, from comments at the meeting and on the BBS that a lot of our membership is unaware of many of these developments. So...it's time to get up to date. What follows is some of the more important news. ...Bill Raecke

Index Information, Ltd. of England has announced two new Amiga compatibles. First to be available is the Access computer, intended as a low cost "Corporate Multimedia delivery platform based on the Amiga Chip Set and Operating System" according to the company's web site. The computer features a mother board that can be fitted in a standard 5 1/4" drive bay, allowing its use in a variety of cases. The computer is shown with a floppy disk and CD-ROM drive. Also mentioned is a compact 8 unit tower case for "major installations".

The company states they have a fully functional prototype in testing. Pre-production manufacturing is due in 2-3 weeks with the a pre-production unit planned for showing at the Hammersmith World of Amiga show, May 17-18.

Features noted by Index include:

- 100% Amiga compatible
- Motherboard can fit in standard 5 1/4" drive bay
- Uses Motorola 68EC020 processor at 14MHz
- 2Mb CHIP RAM, 0Mb, 2Mb, 4Mb or 8Mb FAST RAM
- 230% better performance than a stock A1200
- IDE Hard disk interface IDE CD-ROM, with driver in ROM
- Standard Amiga floppy disk drive
- ISA expansion slot
- Sound sampler complete with microphone input
- Real Time Clock
- CD-DA audio input connector and mixer for configuration information in Non Volatile RAM

Ports for:

- RGB, 15 pin High Density
- Parallel, 25 pin D
- Mouse
- Keyboard, 5 pin Mini-DIN
- Serial
- Composite video
- Stereo sound out, with front volume control
- Mono sound in
- Power In via standard PC 5 1/4" power header
- IDE — 40 pin for 3.5"; Hard disk and CD-ROM

- ISA bus 8 bit
- Floppy drive DF0:

Index's second Amiga compatible is called "InsideOut." It's billed as "A new generation of High-End Amiga Computers." The hardware is complete but the software is still 2 to 3 months away for this computer range, intended to deliver "exceptional performance and a wide range of high performance, but low cost, expansion options."

Features:

- Compatability with all standard Workbench applications
- RISC processor performance
- Accelerated display, 64/128 bit with optional 3D acceleration
- Maximum resolutions beyond 1280x1028 providing 24 bit color
- A PCI bus with driver support for most PCI expansion cards
- Network support - TCP/IP, NetBIOS, etc.

Contact them at: Index Information Ltd

Contact Sales & Marketing:

Fax: +44-(0)1256-701023 E-mail: index@cix.co.uk

9th July 1997 — Since 1995 ICS have been at the forefront in developing expansion systems that enable A1200 and A4000 users to make the best use of Hard Drive and CD Rom technology. Their MMS tm Technology has made it possible for the Amiga to utilise up to four EIDE devices.

In a not surprising announcement ICS have been awarded a license to produce A1200 based tower systems. Micronik and Index Information Ltd have already been granted licenses and it was only a matter of time that the leaders in multimedia technology for the Amiga would follow suit. The new A1200 tower system will be called the Amigo PC range.

"We know that the Amiga is the best machine available for the home and professional user. Its operating system is far superior to that of Wintel and Mac based machines and that's the reason why we don't develop for any other platform. Amiga OS is far more efficient in the areas of memory, resources and hard disk storage than any other operating system. The future of the Amiga has now become very exciting and we were very pleased when we heard the announcement that Micronik, Index Information Ltd and then ourselves had been awarded licenses to produce Amiga based systems" - Barry Turner of Intrinsic

Computer Systems.

In Amigo PC will be supplied in various configurations:

- StormA1200 based tower system
- CycloneA1200 based tower system, 68030 50Mhz CPU with 16 or 32Mb
- TornadoA1200 based tower system, 68060 50Mhz CPU with 16 or 32Mb
- HurricaneA1200 based tower system, PPC603e 200Mhz with 16 or 32Mb

An example of a "Fully Loaded" system would be: Hurricane HC A1200, tower with 2Gb Hard Drive, 16x CD Rom Drive, PPC603e 200Mhz, 34Mb ram, expansion bus, graphics card and monitor.

Every Amigo PC will be bundled with either three new professional software packages or three new games never seen before on the Amiga. These have been supplied by Alive Media Soft who have now transferred several games from the Macintosh and PC to the Amiga platform.

"Although the license is only an interim one that does not allow ICS to use the Amiga name on its products for the next 12 months, the best personal computer there is has just got better" — Barry Turner, Intrinsic Computer Systems.

For further information contact ICS:

Tel: +44 (0)1474 335294 Fax: +44 (0)1474 533500

or visit their web site:

<http://www.centrenet.co.uk/~ics/index.html>

or write to:

Intrinsic Computer Systems

38 Kings Drive

Gravesend Kent DA12 5BJ England

Oberursel, May 12, 1997: phase 5 digital products today announced the expansion of the PowerUp product family for Amiga computers. Beside the two products that had been announced earlier, the Cyberstorm PPC and the Blizzard 603e Power Board, there will be an additional model for the A12000, the Blizzard 603e+ Power Board, which combines the PowerPC RISC processor with an 68040 or 68060 CPU, as well as a model for the Amiga 1500/2000, the Blizzard 2604 Power Board. Additionally, it has been decided that all PowerUp board will come with SCSI on board instead of being an option, which adds additional value to these products.

With this expanded product line, phase 5 digital products offers a complete line of PowerUp accelerators for the Amiga 1200, 1500/2000, 3000 and 4000 models, and provides a smooth upgrade path for owners of 68030-, 68040- or 68060-based accelerators. Additionally, phase 5 will release a fast graphics card as an add-on to those PowerUp models that go into the desktop and tower models, namely the Cyberstorm PPC and the Blizzard 2604

Power Board. The 1997 PowerUp accelerator product line includes the following models:

Cyberstorm PPC

The Cyberstorm PPC accelerator is the high-end PowerUp accelerator for Amiga 3000/4000(T) systems and systems with a compatible processor slot. It features a high-performance PowerPC604e RISC processor in different clock speeds and a socket for either a 68040 or a 68060 processor, a memory expansion option for up to 128 MByte of ultra-fast 64-bit memory, a Wide-Ultra-SCSI controller on board and an expansion slot for high-performance expansions such as the CyberVisionPPC (see below). This board is ideally suited for all A3000/A4000 users who already own an accelerator with either a 68040 or 68060 processor; for Cyberstorm users it will be the PowerUp upgrade offer.

Blizzard 603e Power Board

The Blizzard 603e Power Board is the inexpensive PowerUp accelerator for Amiga 1200 systems. It features a high-performance PowerPC603e RISC processor @ 175 MHz clock speed and a socket for a 68030 companion processor @ 50 MHz, a memory expansion option for up to 64 MByte of high-speed memory, and a Fast-SCSI-II controller on board. This board is ideally suited for all A1200 users who already own an accelerator with a socketed 68030 processor; for Blizzard 1230-II, Blizzard 1230-III and Blizzard 1230-IV users it will be the PowerUp upgrade offer.

Blizzard 603e+ Power Board

The Blizzard 603e+ Power Board is the high-end PowerUp accelerator for Amiga 1200 systems. It features a high-performance PowerPC603e RISC processor @ 200 MHz clock speed and a socket for a 68040 or 68060 companion processor, a memory expansion option for up to 64 MByte of high-speed memory, and a Fast-SCSI-II controller on board. This board will be ideally suited for all A1200 users who already own an accelerator with a 68040 or 68060 processor; for Blizzard 1240T/ERC and Blizzard 1260 users it will be the PowerUp upgrade offer.

Blizzard 2604e Power Board

The Blizzard 2604e Power Board is the high-end PowerUp accelerator for Amiga 2000 (in the UK Amiga 1500) systems. It features a high-performance PowerPC604e RISC processor and a socket for either a 68040 or a 68060 companion processor, a memory expansion option for up to 128 MByte of ultra-fast 64-bit memory, a Wide-Ultra-SCSI controller on board and an expansion slot for high-performance expansions such as the CyberVisionPPC (see below). This board is ideally suited for all A1500/A2000 users who already own an accelerator with either a 68040 or 68060 processor; for Blizzard 2040/2060 users it will be

the PowerUp upgrade offer.

For information on technical specifications of the PowerUp accelerator product family, refer to the PowerUp Specifications

CyberVisionPPC — A high-end graphic card for use with the Cyberstorm PPC and the Blizzard 2604 Power Board

The CyberVisionPPC is a high-performance graphic card which can be installed on the expansion slot of the PowerPC604e-based PowerUp Accelerators, the Cyberstorm PPC and the Blizzard 2604 Power Board. It is scheduled for delivery in August, and will become available simultaneously with the Blizzard 2604 Power Board. Especially for the Blizzard 2604 the use of the

The CyberVisionPPC is equipped with the powerful PERMEDIA graphics controller, which provides an outstanding 3D performance of up to 42 million textured 3D pixels per second

CyberVisionPPC is highly recommended as the slow access to the ECS chip memory or Zorro-II-based graphics boards in the A1500/A2000 may limit the system performance in applications with lots of graphic output; but also the performance of the Cyberstorm PPC will benefit significantly from the data transfer rates of up to 100 MB/s (from the processor into the video memory) in demanding applications such as fast 3D visualization and similar tasks.

Not only the ultra-fast access of the processor into the video memory, but also the internal performance of the CyberVisionPPC will provide a breathtaking performance. The CyberVisionPPC is equipped with the powerful PERMEDIA graphics controller, which provides an outstanding 3D performance of up to 42 million textured 3D pixels per second, with hardware-accelerated rendering functions such as z-buffering, gouraud-shading, fogging, blending and anti-aliasing. As the design of the PERMEDIA hardware suits perfectly for OpenGL implementations, it's 3D performance can support the CyberGL functionality of CyberGraphX V3 Native which comes along with the PowerUp boards. In combination with the high floating-point performance of the PowerPC604e processor a breathtaking performance in professional 3D applications can be achieved by this implementation. Additionally, the PERMEDIA processor supports functions like color space conversion, chroma keying and XY-scaling which will be used by the software MPEG decoding routines of

CyberGraphX V3 Native.

The CyberVisionPPC used 64-bit wide SGRAM with a data transfer rate of up to 660 MB/s; this in combination with the fast RAM-DAC allows display resolutions of up to 1280x1024 pixel in true color mode and with a high refresh rate of at least 70 Hz. The board comes along with 4 MB of display memory as standard. The recommended price for the CyberVisionPPC will be at UK Pound 219.00; customers of a PowerUp upgrade can buy this board for a special rate of UK Pound 189.00. In the USA the recommended price for the CyberVisionPPC will be at US\$ 299.00; customers of a PowerUp upgrade can buy this board for a special rate of US\$ 239.00.

Toronto, May 5, 1997: PXL computers and clickBOOM are proud to announce a cooperation with Phase 5 Digital Products on making games for Power Amiga.

"We strongly believe that the future for the Amiga computer lies in PowerPC processor. Furthermore, we believe Phase 5 is and will continue to be the Amiga hardware leader. Therefore, we have selected Power Amiga as our future platform of choice", says Alexander Petrovic, PXL and clickBOOM producer.

Appropriately enough, the first ever Power Amiga game will be Myst from clickBOOM. It is a perfect opportunity for Myst and PowerUp accelerators to appear at the same time. Following Myst, other forthcoming clickBOOM "killer games" will be fully optimized for the PowerPC chip, as well.

Phase 5 Digital Products highly appreciates the development of Myst for the PowerUp accelerators and the plans of clickBOOM to add PowerUp support to more titles in the future. "We are happy to see how engaged clickBOOM has realized all their ambitious projects in the past, and we are excited that their new projects will be targeted for the PowerUp accelerators" says Wolf Dietrich of phase 5. "Beside all the demanding creativity software that we expect to come for the PowerUp boards, it's good to see powerful games with the real thrill coming also soon. What would such a powerhouse Amiga be without some breathtaking amusement? Still fast, but less fun... It's really impressive and good to see that clickBOOM is in the front line of visionary development for a new performance dimension."

Support for Power Amigas will have several distinct advantages:

1. It will give users a valid reason to upgrade as soon as PowerPC boards become available.
2. New clickBOOM games written for Power Amiga will be breathtaking and a serious competition to the games on other platforms. This in return, will make the rest of the industry look very positively on the Amiga market.

3. Impressive CPU power will allow clickBOOM a technical freedom to convert any big game from other platforms to the Power Amiga.

The exact timeline of clickBOOM Power Amiga releases is still to be decided. Currently, clickBOOM's strategy can be outlined in two steps:

1. Starting with Myst, a couple of forthcoming projects will support both 680x0 and PowerPC chip.
2. ClickBOOM will use this transitional period to work on a first Power Amiga-only "killer" game. After its release, all the following games will be Power Amiga-only.

For more information about our future strategy visit clickBOOM web site at www.clickboom.com

We hope you like our plan and share our vision. Naturally, for the Power Amiga to ultimately succeed we need your support and input. As always, please feel free to contact us at info@clickboom.com

Best regards, PXL computers and clickBOOM

p.OS PreRelease will be available at the middle of July! Suggested Retail Price DM 49.00. Ordering information: The most convenient method of placing an order is to use our electronic order form located at <http://www.schatztruhe.de/order.html>. You can also send an E-Mail to stefano@schatztruhe.de including your address and the products you wish to order. Please do not forget to include your credit cards details.

Product Information

Since its first introduction this new operating system, an innovation started on the Amiga platform, gained tremendous interest from the Amiga community. With this pre-release, every user gets the opportunity to take a closer look into the philosophy of p.OS — the operating system which will soon be available for the Amiga and many other platforms. The prerelease is a nearly complete operating system at a reduced introductory price! You may also upgrade this version to the final release without having to pay more than the difference in price.

For the price of DM 49,00 you'll obtain the p.OS PreRelease on CD ROM or on floppy disc. And as a special introduction bonus you receive — for free — additional demos and tools, which demonstrate the abilities of this operating system. An online tutor introduces you comfortably and with the greatest of ease to all the technical innovations and allows you to become immediately familiar with this powerful operating system.

An excerpt of the features of the prerelease (CD ROM version):

- Complete p.OS workbench. Powerful and comfortable workbench with:
 - Taskmanager

- Taskbar
- Polished Drag&Drop and windows technology
- Powerful p.OS shell
- Many commands with extra options for controlling the DOS
- Comfortable extras like a history slider and Drag&Drop technology in the shell make its use absolutely simple.
- Easy-to-use p.OS filer. Powerful program for organising your files and drives e.g. highly comfortable:
 - copying
 - viewing
 - searching of files and drives
 - Drag&Drop into other tasks like e.g. the shell or picture viewers, sound players etc.
- incl. pOS-DOS fast DOS system with compatibility to AmigaDOS
- incl. demos:
 - various WB games
 - fractal demos
 - creation of animations with effects
 - picture viewers for different formats e.g. IFF, JPG, GIF PNG etc.
 - PhotoDirectory
 - Text viewer
 - Guide viewer (compatible to AmigaGuide)
 - HTML-Viewer
 - complete UNIX emulation with many demos

Available in mid July for only DM 49.

p.OS PreRelease is distributed worldwide by Schatztruhe GmbH.

System requirements:

- Amiga with MC68020 or higher, 4MB RAM.
- CD ROM version: CD ROM drive / harddisk recommended.
- Disk version: Floppy drive (DD) and harddisk.

Restrictions of this version:

- Only usable parallel to Amiga-OS, therefore in parts limited speed in ECS/AGA modes.
- Disks in MAC-OS and MS-DOS format only useable with AMIGA drivers (but usable parallel).
- No printed manual, but ONLINE-Guide resp. HTML-Tutor (in the disk version, because of space limitations, without graphics)

p.OS PreRelease is a product of:

proDAD Software

GbR Feldelestr.

24 D-78194 Immendingen

Phone: + +49-7462-91134

Fax: + +49-7462-74354

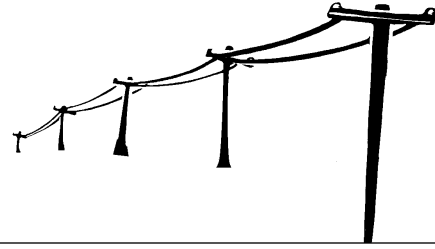
E-Mail:

huber@prodad.de <http://www.prodad.de>

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BBS News

*The Best of The BBS Uploads
Selected by Bill Raecke*



This will be the first month for this new format. This column used to be called "Library News," but with the current widespread BBS and Internet usage, it no longer seems necessary to build library disks each month. Few people wanted them anyway. But it seems to me that there still might be those of you who are interested in my (humble!) opinion of what the best new additions to the our BBS collection are each month. That way you might not have to keep up with everything just to stay current on the best that's out there. This format has another advantage as well...it will allow me to feature things that were too large to fit on a floppy and, thus, never made it to the library. So here goes...

Miami is arguably the best way to access the Internet with an Amiga. It's certainly the easiest and cheapest. For the record, Miami is a TCP/IP stack. If that doesn't make sense, it's the program that actually connects to the Internet via your modem and phone line. Once connected, other programs (for browsing the web, reading and writing e-mail, and reading news groups) can use that connection to let you do what you like. This month Miami was upgraded to 2.1c. There are upgrades for the registered versions and a demo version as well. The demo is fully functional but limits your on-line time to just one hour at a time. After an hour you get disconnected and have to re-connect — but, hey, you ought to be registered anyway.

Like to collect pictures? This is a good month to fill

up that hard drive. There are some outstanding pictures of some horses, tigers, jaguars, and a baby harp seal. And there are about twenty outstanding pictures of wolves. These are really beautiful pictures. You ought to check them out.

If you still use the Amiga's standard serial port and the standard serial.device to make your connections to the BBS and to the Internet, it's time you changed. 8n1.device offers a much better alternative. It's better because it's faster and will use less of your computer's resources while transferring data. That's important because it allows more and better multi-tasking — and also because you won't get as many transmission errors at high connect speeds ('cause your computer is better able to keep up with things with this more efficiently written device driver). If you're already using the 8n1.device, you still should make sure you have the latest version.

MCP has been upgraded this month to version 1.30 beta 20. Yes, it's a beta version...but I've been running it without problems, so I have no hesitation about recommending it. MCP stands for "Master Control Program." It's the "ultimate" commodity. It provides just about every system enhancement you can think of from mouse blanking to gadget enhancement. I can't imagine my Amiga without this program.

Of course, there are the standard, monthly updates to the akPNG, akLJPG, akJFIF, akSVG, and akPNG datatypes. These datatype are written to be used with the CyberGraphX retargetable graphics system. They are amazingly fast. If you are using the CyberGraphX software you need to be using these datatypes.

TolleUhr is the nicest-looking analog clock you'll find. I keep it running on my Workbench all the time. New in this version is support for the upgraded picture datatype for CyberGraphX software. This makes it possible to run the clock on a 16 or 24-bit Workbench and use any brush to serve as a fill pattern. There's even an option to make the clock "transparent" so that you can see the background right through it, with or without a frame around the window. Makes a really nice effect! **AGM**



Meeting Notes



Amiga By-The-Loop Meeting Johnny C. Kitchens

June gives us heat and waiting on what the heck is going on with the Amiga. Gateway has yet to make a real statement on what they intend to do. Like heat, waiting can really get you down in a situation like this. We also have two other companies moving in their own direction. Pios has Dave Haynie, innovator of many Amiga parts, working on a PowerPC powered Amiga replacement, featuring off-the-shelf parts for a very low price with great performance. Then there is phase5 with their PowerUp cards, featuring PowerPC for existing Amigas, and the A\Box, their interpretation of the Amiga for the future. That is three different paths hoping to lead to the same goal. All of them can succeed if they can be compatible with each other.

For our meeting in June we were a bit shocked to see we were not scheduled for the meeting. A small event like ours can fall through the cracks at a big company like the one hosting us. It is free so how can we complain! We started off the meeting by announcing a new way to handle the library. No more disk of the month! With declining membership, modems being more common, and the Internet, the library has fewer needs put upon it. I remember when it took the whole meeting for the librarian to copy all the disks that were needed. Now he rarely needs to turn on his computer. Due to a rather noisy meeting in the next room, we decided to move to another room and discovered much of the stuff we used at our previous location! We then discussed METCOM. Our annual event looks to be facing a tough year. Money can kill all sorts of things, and METCOM is facing just that sort of shortage. Cost of setup, cost of location, and cost overall are a few of the factors facing METCOM. One thing is sure — we intend to do

something! We next moved to the latest news on PowerPC, which, as I mentioned, appears to be converging on the Amiga. Our question session brought us a few things to discuss, such as replacement power supplies. If you need one take a look at the Big Foot. Internet service providers came up next. The Star Telegram has proved to be a favorite with its free service if you subscribe. They now even offer a post card service. We finally moved to our main presentation, BIG MONITORS! Opps, that's what we planned, instead we had a presentation on computer maintenance. Ink cartridge refilling for printers, mouse maintenance, edge connector cleaning, and keyboard cleaning. This might not sound exciting, but it worked for me. I cleaned my keyboard for the first time ever. Thanks, it looks great!

July gives us more heat and more waiting on what the heck is going on with the Amiga. At least by the time you read this, we will know that three companies have been licensed to make Amiga clones. While I find this good news and a bit exciting, what I found interesting was that these companies are allowed to say "powered by Amiga" but not that they are Amiga computers. They are also offering features not available on real Amiga computers, such as PCI slots. Amiga International has released a few software upgrades, and they have hired a few new people, but no news from them yet. You know it gets very hot in August.

The July meeting gave us a more advanced version of the previous month. This time the door was locked! Fortunately, we still got in. Our meeting started off with the announcement that METCOM will take place on October 25, 1997! This got everyone talking about what would or will happen. Look for a full announcement in our



newsletter! We then moved to talk on what was happening with the Amiga. Whether it is the new clones, the new PowerPC accelerators, or the new designs, all were providing Amiga users something to think about. The big question for the night. Where to now? What should I do, with all of these choices being presented to us? All of this seemed an appropriate lead-in for our main presentation — a demonstration of what is available to Amiga users today. We had three A-3000's with 68060, 68040, and 68030. The 68060 had a Cybervision 64, the 68040 had a Picasso II+, and the 68030 used the ECS chipset. We had an A-4000 with 68040 and AGA, and a 68030-powered A-1200 with AGA. A comparison test showed the obvious. Accelerators and graphics cards give you the fastest Amiga. The differences were truly amazing in graphics. One surprise was the 1200 beating the 4000 in several graphics tests. This is due to a design flaw in the 4000. It was intended to be one machine and a last minute change made it the machine we know. There are actually some pieces in the 4000 that are not used. When it came time for the 1200, these bugs were fixed. This explains the 1200 motherboard as being the starting point for all of these clones coming out. Finally, we got to see what might be the final upgrade for any Amiga. A 16 bit sound card! One of the disappointing things about the AGA chipset when it came out was the lack of an update of Paula. Rumors of a new super Paula hung around 'till the very end of Commodore. Though a few sound cards have come and gone over the years, none have really been a replacement for Paula. That has changed with the introduction of several sound cards during the year. The Delfina was the card shown at the meeting, giving a taste of what 16 bit sound is about. If the machines of the future beat what was shown tonight by such a large margin as they say, 350MIPS for the PowerPC vs 82MIPS for the 68060, then the future of the Amiga looks fast for everyone. Now if they would just speed up the news on what is going on!

Amiga North Dallas Meeting Michael Turner

Our July meeting started just a little late as there was quite a bit of pre-meeting banter going on. Various topics of discussion included finalization of Gateway's acquisition of Amiga International, differences between various accelerator boards and why there are so many advertisers in the Amiga magazines wanting to buy old A2000s. One member also mentioned that he had not received the latest issue of Amiga Computing and wanted to know if anyone else had received theirs. Also, someone finally explained where and what a video port is to me!

Eddie Corr also mentioned that SoftLogik is shipping their latest upgrade to PageStream. Upgrades to ImageFX and Aladin 3-D are also available. It is nice to see that there are still a number of software companies supporting the

Amiga! One member also mentioned he had some old harddrives for sale and naturally this led to a side discussion on various harddrives.

Ned Kelly announced that there are indeed tentative plans for another METCOM this year. The date tentatively scheduled is for Saturday, October 25th. However, the location has changed to the Brookside Center in Hurst. Of course, the flea market will be held as usual however, as the Brookside Center is just one open room there probably will not be any classes held this time, although with enough interest shown this could possibly change. On a positive note, parking will be free.

Gus finally broke through all this to call the meeting to order. After a few minor preliminaries of hooking up our computer to the projection TV screen, we once again began "surfing the net" in order "to see what we could see." What we saw were pictures of Sojourner rover on the surface of Mars. Yes, we were at the NASA website. Not only were there pictures of the surface of Mars, but there were pictures and descriptions of the rover itself. How the rover moved, how big it was, and what powered it were all covered at this site. Interesting facts such as how much power it consumed per day and the shelf life of its batteries were all explained in clear and metaphorically based comparisons. Somehow, we reached a link to a Star Trek website and from there it was a short hop to the Babylon V homepage where there were posted summaries of all the past, present and (soon to be) future shows.

After that, we visited a few sites dedicated to some TV celebrities (that I had no idea who they were) and then one member gave an address for a homepage that he had designed. Naturally, this brought out a discussion on what software one might use to do such a thing and how one might go about doing it.

In between, we also visited the Software Hut homepage and a couple of other interesting sites that nobody was exactly sure what they were, even after we read the pages and looked at the pictures! Perhaps "art for the sake of art" is not all it's cracked up to be!

By this time it was time to pack it all up and call it a night. Gus mentioned that if anyone has a good idea for a presentation, please let us know. It's all good to use the Amiga to peek into the lives of celebrities, read deranged homepages designed by slightly paranoid-schizophrenic minds, and to visit the surface of Mars, but every once in a while it's nice to see something normal done with this great computer on planet earth. So, if you're doing something unusual or abnormal with your Amiga (or even something usual and normal), bring it to our next meeting. We'd love to see it!

We'll meet next month same place, same time, on the third Tuesday of the month. Remember, if you arrive just a little late there will be a walkie-talkie by the front door. Just turn it on and speak into it and someone will be down in a minute to let you in. See Ya' There!

The MCCC

Statement of Purpose: The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education, and to the use of Amiga (formally Commodore) computers in the home, at school, and in business.

Legal Stuff: The MCCC is not connected with Gateway 2000 or Amiga International. The Amiga product name is a registered trademark of Gateway 2000.

Meetings and Membership: Our meetings are open to all. Family membership dues are \$24 per year or \$15 for six months and entitle the member to a mailed copy of the newsletter and free access to the club's extensive public domain and shareware software library. An additional \$12 annual fee provides access to the MCCC multi-user Bulletin Board System.

AGM Journal

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Advertising: The AGM Journal accepts two kinds of advertising. Member ads are those which are submitted by a member and which are not of a commercial nature. There is no charge for member ads. Commercial ads are those which advertise multiple like items for sale. Rates for camera-ready commercial ads are as follows for a single month or (prepaid consecutive three months): Full Page — \$36 (\$96); Half Page — \$18 (\$48); Quarter Page — \$12 (\$32); Business Card — \$6 (\$16).

Articles: Members are encouraged to submit articles. Articles may be submitted in virtually any Amiga-generated format. They may be uploaded to the MCCC BBS or sent via e-mail to wraecke@arlington.net, or submitted on disk.

Deadline: The deadline for submissions to the AGM Journal is 7am of the fourth Saturday of each month. Payment must accompany all ad copy. Make checks payable to MCCC and mail c/o Bill Raecke, 2614 Charolais Way, Arlington, Texas 76017.

Extra Copies: Extra Copies of the MCCC News are available at \$1 per copy. Orders should be forwarded with the required fee by the newsletter deadline.

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BBS Numbers

Metro.....	28,800 BAUD.....	817-268-4191
Local.....	28,800 BAUD.....	817-280-9900

Thought For The Month

People will accept your ideas much more readily if you tell them that Benjamin Franklin said it.

Calendar Of Events

Aug 5 MCCC Board of Directors Meeting
7:30 pm — Ned Kelly's place
2709 Wolff Drive, Arlington

Aug 12 Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm
Bell Helicopter Training Facility
Trinity at Norwood, Hurst

Aug 19 Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm
Black Building
Addison north
of Westgrove
Near the tollway

Aug 23 September Newsletter
Deadline

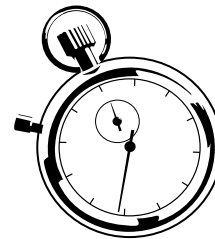


Membership Watch

Memberships Expired in July

Joe Algermissen
Jim Pritchett

Joe Dwyer



Memberships Expiring in August

Adam Dye
Richard Levine
Jim Waters

Herschel Gibbs
John Srader
Harold Williams

The AGM Journal

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